

Frequently Asked Questions about Fire Codes, Plans & Inspections

What types of structures are governed by local fire codes?

All types of structures, except State and Federal buildings, and single/multifamily homes.

How do I schedule an inspection?

You can schedule an inspection by calling our offices at 317-327-6006 or sending an email (ethel.dodds@indy.gov) with your business address or the location that you are requesting an inspection for. An Inspector will contact you to arrange an inspection. Please allow 48 hours for a response.

What is Plan Review

Plan Review is responsible for verifying that designs submitted for construction comply with the Indiana Building Code. Plans shall be submitted for new construction and/or build outs in existing space.

How do I Submit Plans for new construction

The State of Indiana, visit <http://www.in.gov/dhs/2372>

The City of Indianapolis visit

<http://www.indy.gov/eGov/City/DCE/Permits/Pages/home.aspx>

The following are a list of common questions for our Plan Review Section:

What if I buy/lease a building or space that will be used differently? An example would be Grocery Store that will now be used as a church?

In accordance with the Indiana General Administrative Rules, Section 12-4-11(b), No change in the character or use of any building or structure shall be permitted that shall cause the building or structure to be classified within a different occupancy group or within a different division of the same occupancy group, unless the building or structure complies with, or is made to comply with the current rules of the commission for new construction for the proposed revised use of the building. See the Indiana General Administrative Rules for exceptions.

Listed Audible and Visible Devices, AKA Exterior Horns and Strobes - Listed audible and visible devices shall be connected to every automatic sprinkler system. Such sprinkler water flow alarm devices shall be activated by water flow equivalent to the flow of a single sprinkler of the smallest orifice size installed in the system. 2014 IFC Section 903.4.2

FDC internal threaded swivel fittings - Each fire department connection (FDC) shall have at least two-2 ½ inch internal (female) threaded swivel fittings. NFPA 14-2000, Section 2-8.2

FDC shall be located not less than 18 inches -Section 4-3.6 Fire department connections (FDC) shall be located not less than 18 inches nor more than 48 inches above the level of the adjoining ground. NFPA 14-2000, Section 403.6.

FDC shall be on the street side of the building - Fire department connections (FDC) shall be on the street side of the building. NFPA 14-2000, Section 4-3.5.1

Water supply for automatic sprinkler systems, electrically supervised - All valves controlling the water supply for automatic sprinkler systems shall be electrically supervised. IFC 2014, Section 903.4.1.

Fire Hydrants, Where required - Where a portion of the facility or building hereafter constructed or moved into or within the jurisdiction is more than 400 feet (122 m) from a hydrant on a fire apparatus access road, as measured by an approved route around the exterior of the facility or building, on-site fire hydrants and mains shall be provided. IFC 2014, Section 507.5.1.

Clear space around hydrants - A 3-foot (914 mm) clear space shall be maintained around the circumference of fire hydrants, except as otherwise required or approved. IFC 2014, Section 507.5.5

Key box - where required - Whenever the servicing fire department has instituted a key box emergency access system, a key box compatible with that system shall be installed in an accessible location if:

- (1) The building is protected with an automatic sprinkler system equipped with a local or transmitted water-flow alarm, or
- (2) The building is provided with any fire alarm system equipped with an outside audible/visual signaling device, or
- (3) The building is provided with any fire alarm system where the alarm is transmitted to an off-site location, or to the fire alarm center for the servicing fire department.

IFC 2014, Section 506.1

Address shall be visible and legible from the street - New and existing buildings shall have approved address numbers, building numbers or approved building identification placed in a position that is plainly legible and visible from the street or road fronting the property. These numbers shall contrast with their background. Address numbers shall be provided in additional approved locations to facilitate emergency response. Numbers shall be a minimum of 4 inches (101.6 mm) high with a minimum stroke width of 0.5 inch (12.7 mm). Where access is by means of a private road and the building cannot be viewed from the public way, a monument, pole or other sign or means shall be used to identify the structure.

Fire Apparatus Access Roads - Buildings and facilities. Approved fire apparatus access roads shall be provided for every facility, building or portion of a building hereafter constructed or moved into or within the jurisdiction. The fire apparatus access road shall comply with the requirements of this section and shall extend to within 150 feet (45.72 m) of all portions of the facility and all portions of the exterior walls of the first story of the building as measured around the perimeter of the exterior of the building or facility. Exception: Buildings protected throughout by a supervised automatic fire sprinkler system and not used for high-piled combustible storage in excess of twelve thousand (12,000) square feet. IFC 2014, Section 503.1.1

Fire Apparatus Road Dimensions - Fire apparatus access roads shall have an unobstructed width of not less than 20 feet (6096 mm), exclusive of shoulders, except for approved security gates in accordance with Section 503.6, and an unobstructed vertical clearance of not less than 13 feet 6 inches (4115 mm). IFC 2014, Section 503.2.1

Panic and fire exit hardware - Doors serving a Group H occupancy and doors serving rooms or spaces with an occupant load of 50 or more in a Group A or E occupancy shall not be provided with a latch or lock unless it is panic hardware or fire exit hardware. **Exception:** A main exit of a Group A occupancy in compliance with Section 1008.1.9.3, Item 2. IFC 2014, Section 1008.1.10

Portable fire extinguishers for commercial cooking equipment - Portable fire extinguishers shall be provided within a 30-foot (9144 mm) travel distance of commercial-type cooking equipment. Cooking equipment involving solid fuels or vegetable or animal oils and fats shall be protected by a Class K rated portable extinguisher in accordance with Section 904.11.5.1 or 904.11.5.2, as applicable. IFC 2014, Section 904.11.5

How do I report a possible fire code violation or unsafe situation?

Please contact our office to report the unsafe situation or code violation. An inspector will be sent out to verify the code violation and issue corrective notices if applicable.

What should my business do if the fire alarm/sprinkler system is impaired or out of service?

Please contact the Indianapolis Fire Department at 317-327-6066.